

Week Ending Friday, May 11, 2001

The President's Radio Address

May 5, 2001

Good morning. Today I want to offer a special greeting to everyone celebrating Cinco de Mayo. This day marks the proud moment when Mexican soldiers threw back an invading army at the Battle of Puebla. One hundred and thirty-nine years later Cinco de Mayo pays tribute to the strong and independent spirit of the Mexican people.

We celebrated a little early at the White House this year, on *quatro de Mayo*, with a fiesta on the South Lawn, with the mariachi music, folkloric dancing, and an ample supply of Mexican food. For a little while, it was just like being in Texas again.

Growing up in Texas gave me many things I'm thankful for, and one of them is an appreciation of the Hispanic culture. In Texas, it's in the air you breath. Hispanic life, Hispanic culture, and Hispanic values are inseparable from the life of our State and have been for many generations. The history of Mexican-American relations has had its troubled moments, but today our peoples enrich each other in trade and culture and family ties.

To affirm that friendship, Laura and I have invited Mexican President Vicente Fox to be the guest of honor at the very first state dinner of my administration. President Fox is a fine man, a man of powerful ideals and a great vision for his country. We have already met three times this year. I consider him a friend. We are committed to working together in common purpose for the good of both countries. Whether the issue is free trade or energy production, environmental protection or the control of illegal drugs, our interests are often the same.

In the United States, I'm happy to say, we're putting old fears and quarrels behind us. We know that we must protect the integrity of our border, yet we understand how that border can be viewed from the other side, as the gateway to better wages and a

better life. I've often said that family values don't stop at the Rio Grande. The best way to have a stable border is better opportunity in both our nations, opportunity built by trade and education and freedom.

And when immigrants come to America legally, their culture and contribution must be treated with respect. They have an equal place in the American story, a story written in many hands and told in many languages. This welcoming spirit is the heritage of the immigrant Nation and the commitment of my administration.

Cinco de Mayo is a day for special pride and remembrance for all of Mexico. And for all Americans, it is a reminder of the heritage we share with our neighbor to the south and the great promise of the future.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9 a.m. on May 4 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 5. The address was also recorded in Spanish. Both transcripts were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 4 but were embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Amir Hamad Khalifa of Bahrain

May 7, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome His Highness to America. Bahrain is a close friend of our country. It housed our 5th Fleet—strong allies. He has made a big difference in his own country, been on the leading edge of reform. He believes in human rights and believes in the full participation of the people of his land. And we're really grateful for your leadership. It's such an honor to welcome you here.

Amir Khalifa. Thank you. I am pleased to have this honor today to meet with the President, who has been promising from the day he wanted to be in this job. And I'm